

Ministry of Agriculture Public Trust Survey

Insightrix Research, Omnibus Survey, May 2021

Executive Summary

The Ministry of Agriculture has participated in omnibus polling since 2013 to gain insight into the public's perception of the agriculture and agri-food industry, to assess the impact of efforts to build public trust and to establish benchmarks for the future initiatives.

The 2021 Public Trust Survey, conducted by Inshgtrix Research in May, asked 801 Saskatchewan residents for their perspectives on 10 questions. The results continue to show Saskatchewan residents have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture. For example, 89 per cent respondents "agreed" or "strongly agreed" to the statement *I have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture*. Furthermore, 91 per cent of respondents agree food produced in Saskatchewan is safe.

The survey continues to show high positive responses to questions related to the humane treatment of animals, environmental stewardship, innovation in agriculture and food safety. Questions gauging whether the government's regulations for agriculture protect the interests of the public and the transparency of the agriculture sector's communications of practices, show lower positive perception compared to other questions. Sixty-two per cent of respondents agreed that government's agriculture regulations protect the interest of the public and 54 per cent agree the agriculture sector communicates transparently. This highlights the importance of informing consumers on Saskatchewan's robust regulatory framework. It also demonstrates consumers want the agriculture industry to communicate their practices with greater transparency. When asked what the agriculture industry could do to be more transparent, almost 50 per cent of respondents indicated the industry honestly communicate about their practices.

Access to credible information about agriculture proved to be an important driver of public trust. When analyzed against the other nine public trust questions, agreeing that one had access to credible information about agriculture, made respondents more likely to agree with the other questions. This shows that access to credible information is more important than demographics and ought to remain a pivotal focus of the industry.

The demographic analysis provides additional insight. The 18-34 age group is more likely to disagree, strongly disagree or choose "Don't Know" to a number of questions. Similarly, female respondents are more likely to disagree, strongly disagree or choose "Don't Know" to the majority of the questions. These results seem to suggest the biggest gains to increasing public trust will be achieved by focusing on the 18-34 age group and female residents of the province. Similar to 2020, the respondents from the south region of the province were again more likely to agree to the majority of the questions.

When compared to national polling done by the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity (CCFI), Saskatchewan residents show greater support for the industry. Statements focused on the overall

perception of the industry, humane treatment of livestock, environmental stewardship, food safety, among others, were more favourable among Saskatchewan residents when compared to the broader Canadian population.

The results of this survey will help inform the agriculture sector in relation to policies, programs and initiatives, with the goal of building society's trust in, and acceptance of, modern food production.

Results

1. I have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.

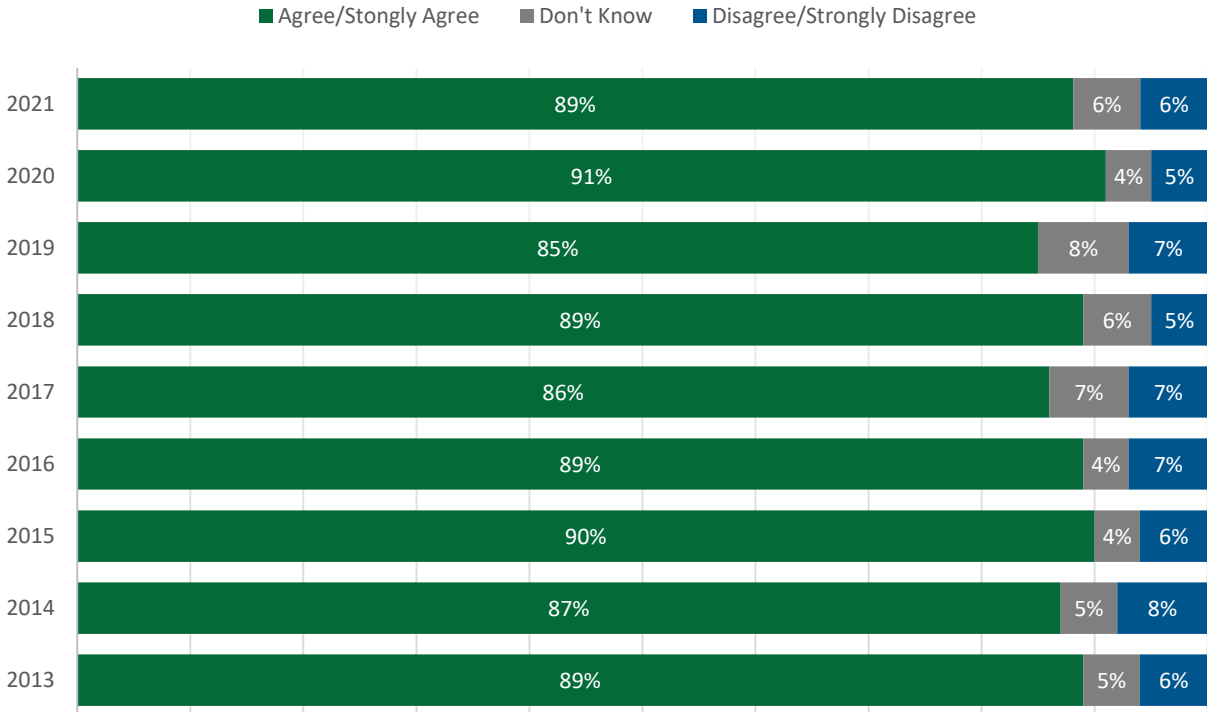
2021 Results¹

Agree/Strongly Agree	89%
Don't Know	6%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	6%

Notable

- Respondents from the south region of the province are more likely to strongly agree compared to the north, Regina and Saskatoon regions.
- Respondents from the 18-34 age group are more likely to disagree or strongly disagree, the 35-54 age group are more likely to strongly agree and the 55+ age group are more likely to agree.

Yearly Comparison



¹ The results (per cents) do not total 100 due to rounding.

2. Livestock in Saskatchewan are treated humanely.

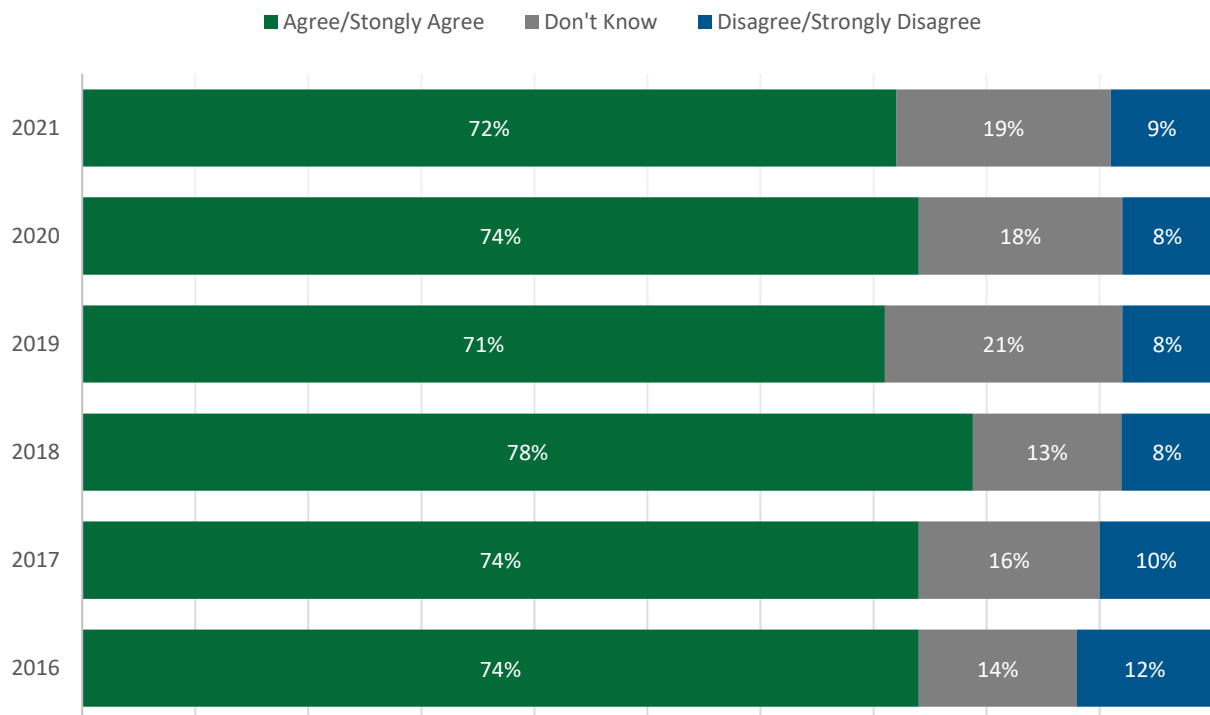
2021 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	72%
Don't Know	19%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	9%

Notable

- The statement used in 2016-2018 was "I believe livestock in Saskatchewan are treated humanely."
- Respondents from the south region of the province are more likely to strongly agree compared to the north, Regina and Saskatoon regions.
- Respondents from the 18-34 age group are more likely to disagree or strongly disagree, whereas the 35-54 age group are more likely to strongly agree and the 55+ age group are more likely to agree.
- Women are more likely to choose "Don't Know" than men (14 per cent).

Yearly Comparison



3. Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers take care of the environment.

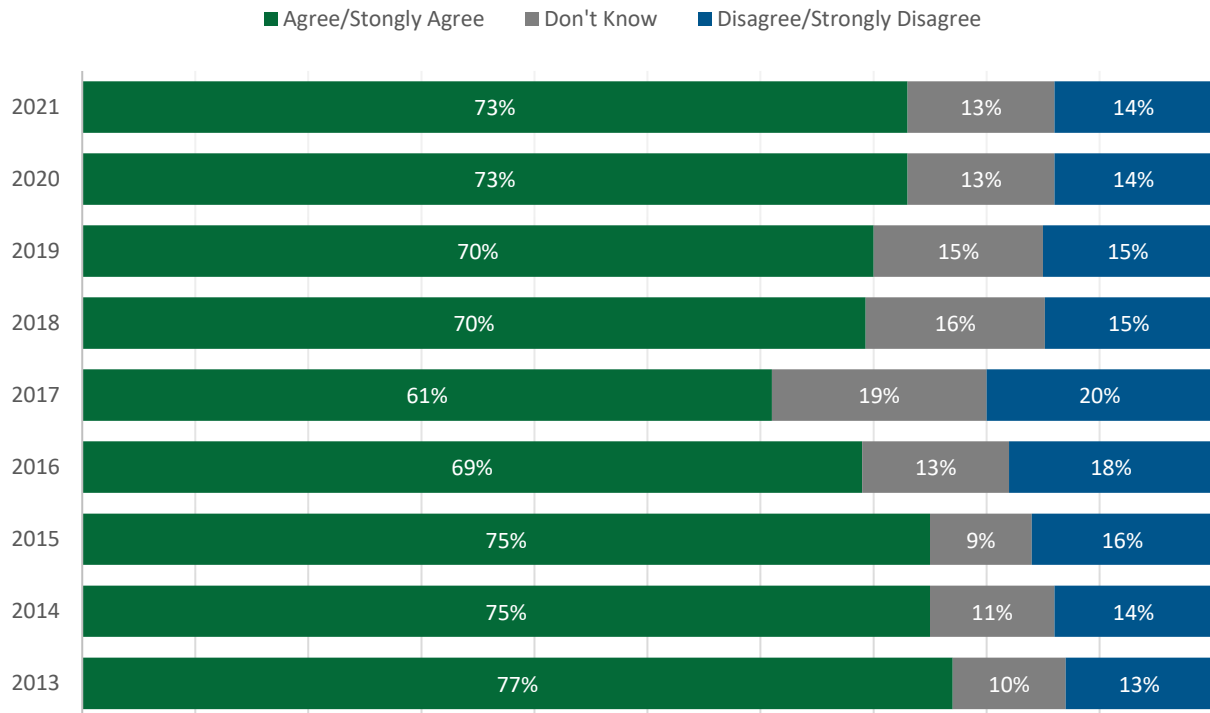
2021 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	73%
Don't Know	13%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	14%

Notable

- The statement used from 2013 to 2015 was “Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers are good stewards of the land, sustaining the environment for future generations.”
- Respondents from the 18-34 age group are more likely to disagree or strongly disagree, whereas the 35-54 age group are more likely to strongly agree and the 55+ age group are more likely to agree.
- Men are more likely to disagree than women.
- The respondents from the south region are more likely to agree compared to the north, Regina and Saskatoon regions.
- Respondents with university education are more likely to disagree compared to other education groups.

Yearly Comparison



4. Government’s agriculture regulations protect the interests of the public.

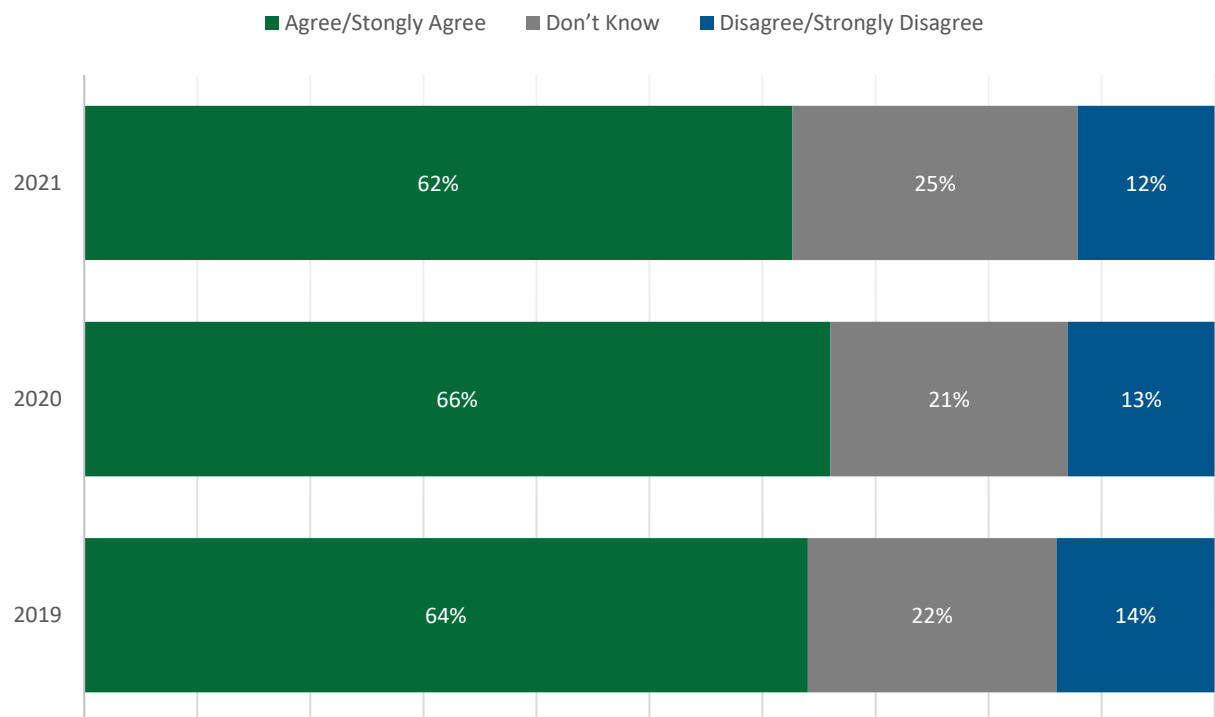
2021 Results²

Agree/Strongly Agree	62%
Don’t Know	25%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	12%

Notable

- The question was first asked in 2019 as “Government’s agriculture regulations protect the interests of the public.”
- A significant portion of respondents (25 per cent, up four per cent from 2020) don’t know if the government’s regulations for the agriculture industry protect the interests of the public.
- Respondents from the 18-34 age group are more likely to select “Don’t Know” or are less likely to agree compared to other age groups.

Yearly Comparison



² The results (per cents) do not total 100 due to rounding.

5. Farmers and ranchers follow government and industry rules and regulations.

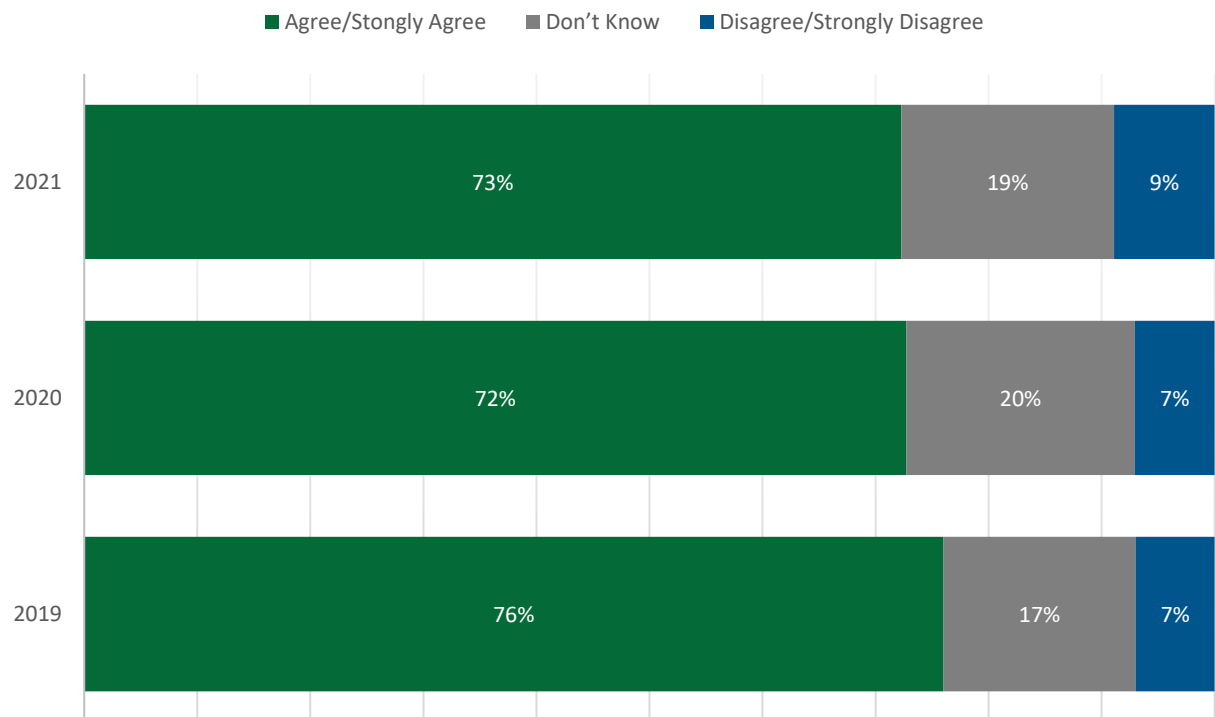
2021 Results³

Agree/Strongly Agree	73%
Don't Know	19%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	9%

Notable

- Respondents from the 18-34 age group are more likely to choose “Don't Know” or less likely to agree compared other age groups.
- Respondents from the south region of the province is more likely to agree compared to the north, Regina and Saskatoon regions.

Yearly Comparison



³ The results (per cents) do not total 100 due to rounding.

6. I support the growth of intensive livestock development in my community.

2021 Results⁴

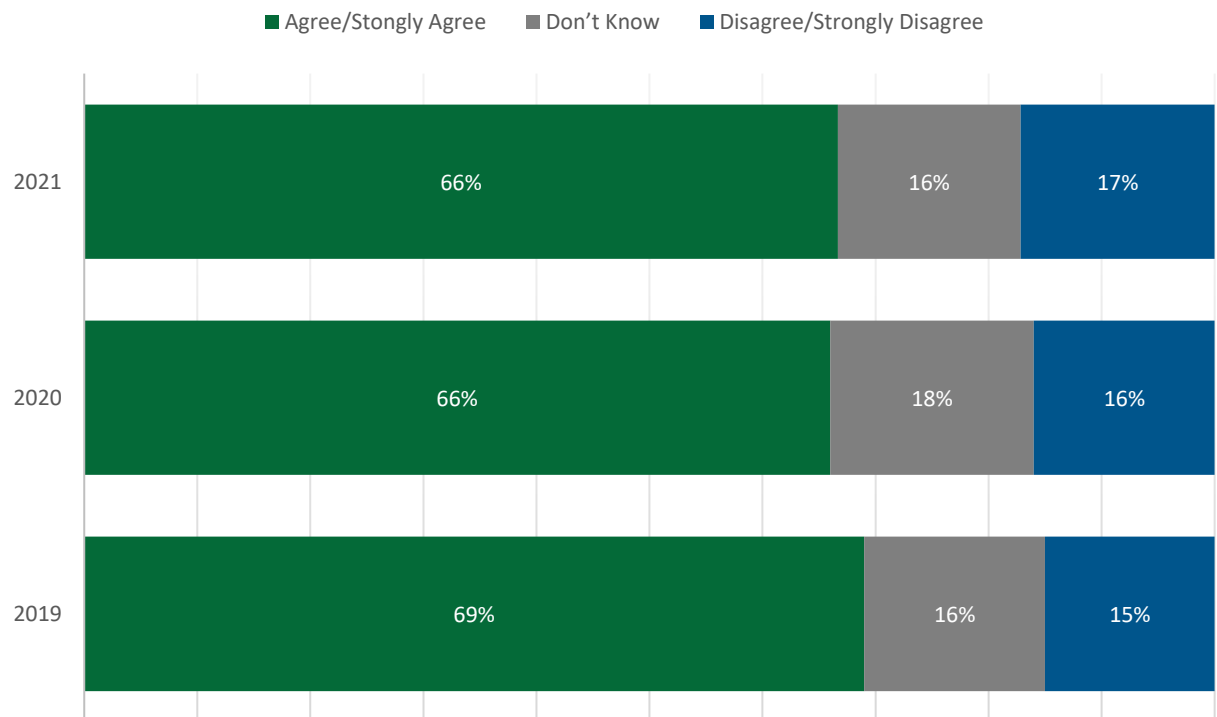
Agree/Strongly Agree	66%
Don't Know	16%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	17%

Notable

- Respondents from the 18-34 age group are more likely to choose “Don't Know” whereas the 35-54 age group is more likely to strongly agree and 55+ age group is less likely to strongly agree.
- Respondents from the south region are more likely to agree compared to the north, Regina and Saskatoon regions.
- The rate of disagreement increased with education level:

High School or Less	Some Technical School or College/Some University	Completed University Degree/Technical or College Diploma
6%	12%	22%

Yearly Comparison



⁴ The results (per cents) do not total 100 due to rounding.

7. I have access to credible information about agriculture and food.

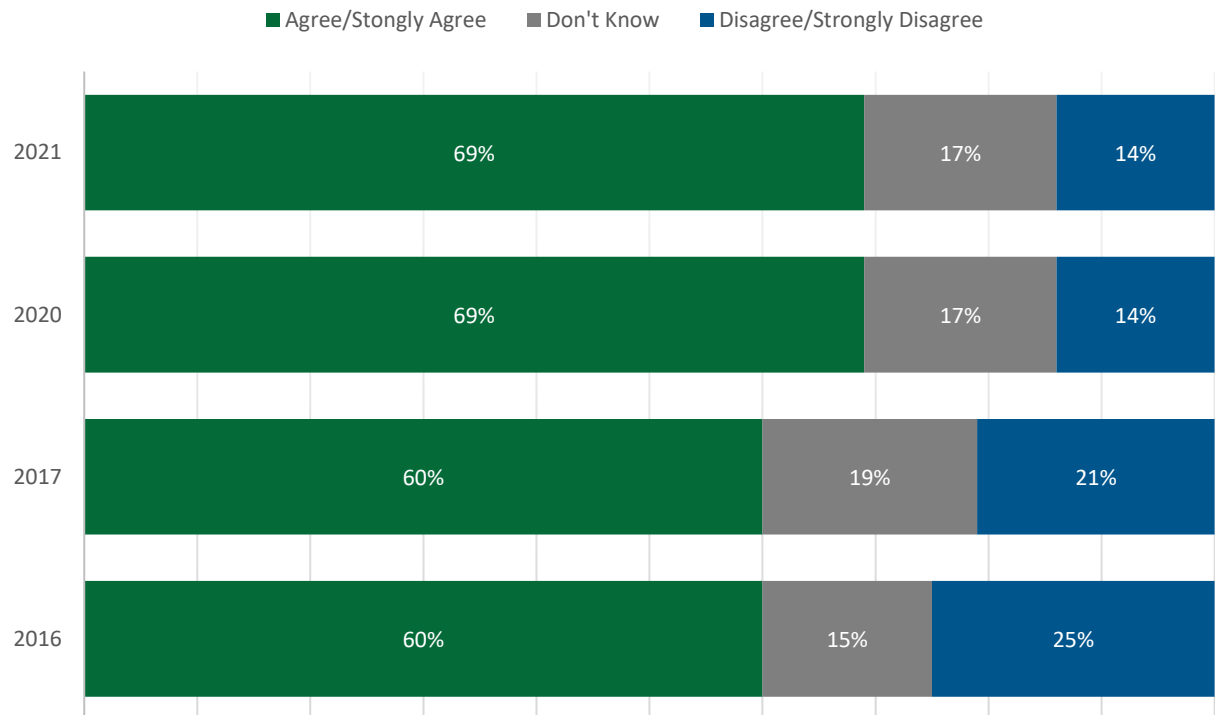
2021 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	69%
Don't Know	17%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	14%

Notable

- Respondents from the south region are more likely to agree compared to north region, Regina and Saskatoon regions.

Yearly Comparison



8. Innovation in agriculture ensures food affordability.

2021 Results

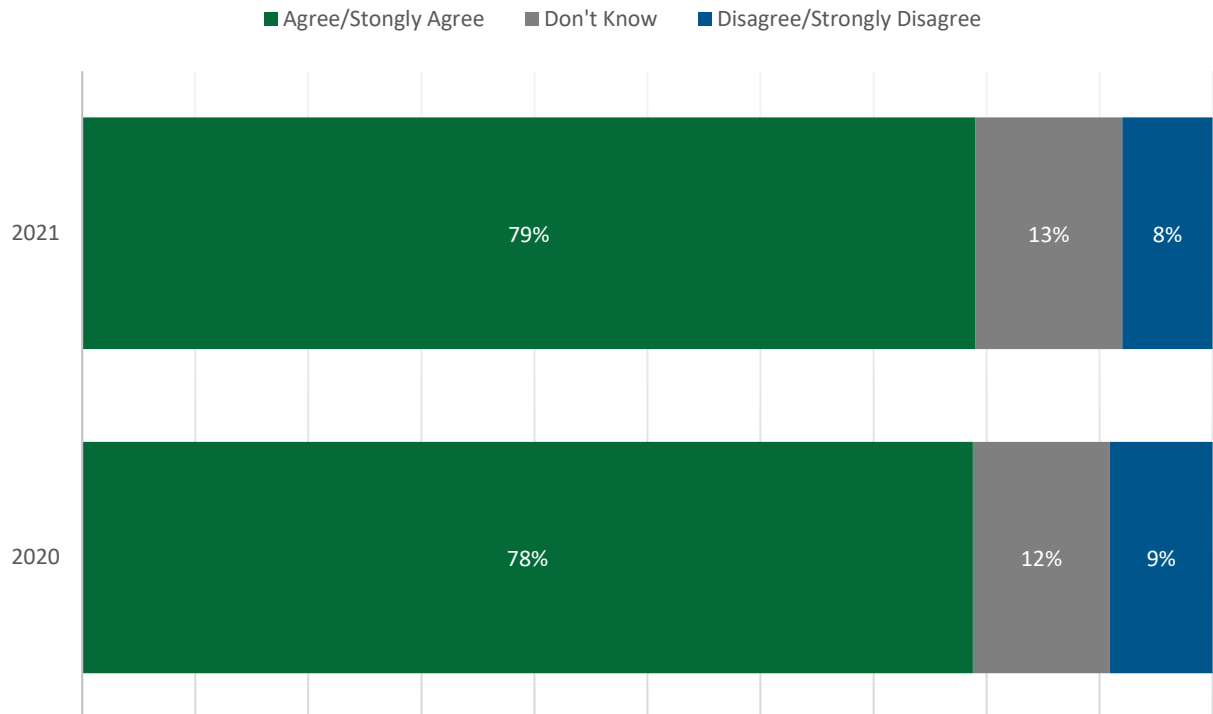
Agree/Strongly Agree	79%
Don't Know	13%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	8%

Notable

- Men are more likely to agree whereas women are more likely to choose "Don't Know."
- The rate of agreement increased with education level:

High School or Less	Some Technical School or College/Some University	Completed University Degree/Technical or College Diploma
71%	74%	84%

Yearly Comparison



9. Food produced in Saskatchewan is safe.

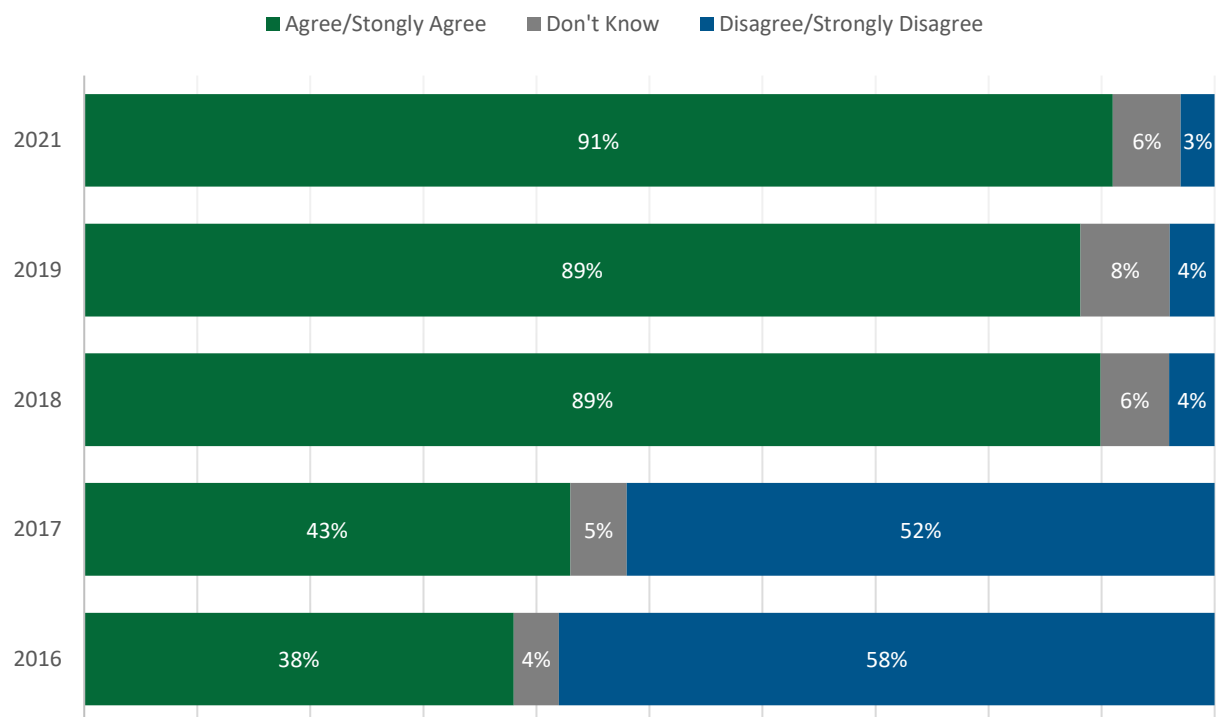
2021 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	91%
Don't Know	6%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	3%

Notable

- The question was first asked in 2016 and 2017 as “I believe all food in the grocery stores is safe” and in 2018 as “I believe food produced by Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers are safe.”
- Respondents from the 18-34 age group are more likely to choose “Don't Know” or disagree than other age groups; whereas the 35-54 is more likely to agree.
- Men are more likely to strongly agree than women.

Yearly Comparison



10. The agriculture sector transparently communicates about their practices.

2021 Results

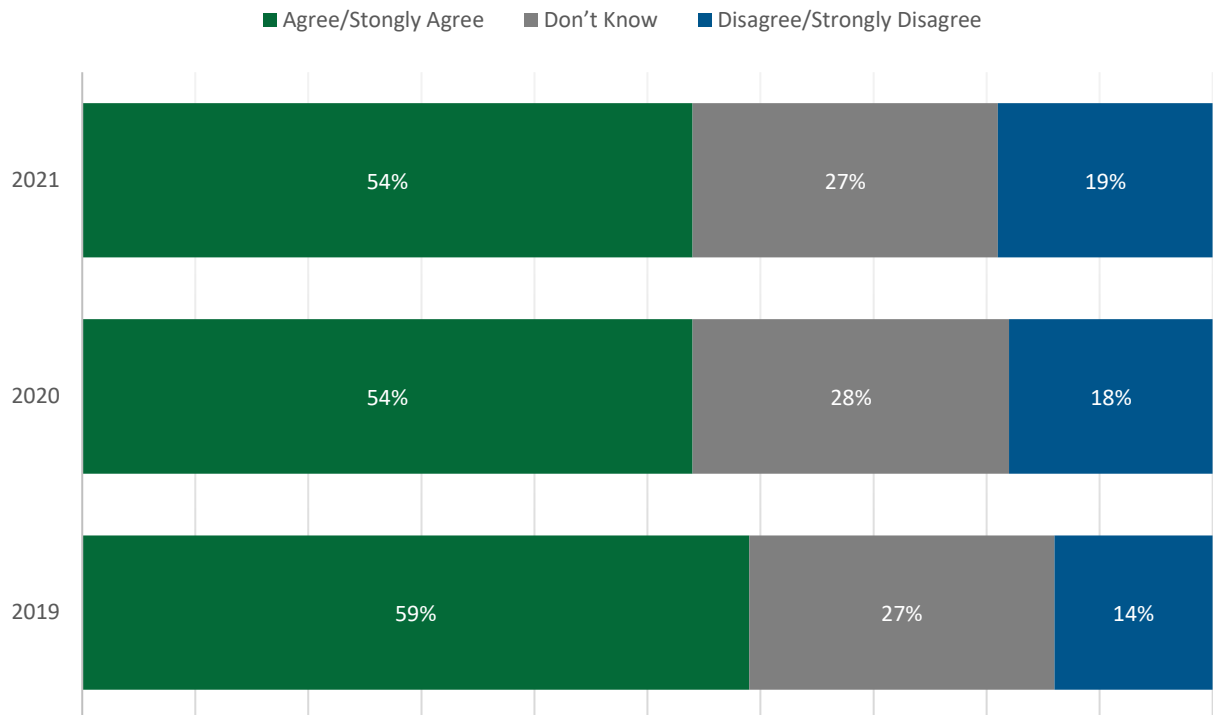
Agree/Strongly Agree	54%
Don't Know	27%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	19%

Notable

- Respondents from the south region are more likely to agree compared to the north, Regina and Saskatoon regions.
- Respondents from the 18-34 age group are more likely to strongly disagree or disagree.
- Women are more likely to choose "Don't Know" compared to men.
- The rate of disagreement increased with education level:

High School or Less	Some Technical School or College/Some University	Completed University Degree/Technical or College Diploma
10%	18%	21%

Yearly Comparison



10. a. What could the agriculture industry do to be more transparent?

2021 Results

(Honest) communication/information of practices	46%
Recognize/enforce climate change rules	12%
Chemicals/fertilizers/pesticides used	12%
More advertising	11%
Animal treatment regulations/practices	11%
Proper food information/labelling	8%
Stop spraying/using chemicals	5%
Other	8%
Don't know/no comment	12%

Notable:

- This question was asked in follow-up to question ten and is the first time an open-ended question was included.
- Nearly 20 per cent of the total surveyed residents (801) responded to this question.

APPENDIX A: 2021 Public Trust Omnibus Results at a Glance

Note: Number in brackets is the change in percentage from 2020 aside from question nine which was last asked in 2019.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements:	Agree & Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Disagree & Strongly Disagree
1. I have a positive a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture ⁵ .	89% [-2]	6% [+2]	6% [+1]
2. Livestock in Saskatchewan are treated humanely.	72% [-2]	19% [+1]	9% [+1]
3. Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers take care of the environment.	73%	13%	14%
4. Government's agriculture protect the interest of the public.	62% [-4]	25% [+4]	12% [-1]
5. Farmers and ranchers follow government and industry rules and regulations.	73% [+1]	19% [-1]	9% [+2]
6. I support the growth of intensive livestock development in my community.	66%	16% [-2]	17% [+1]
7. I have access to credible information about agriculture and food.	69%	17%	14%
8. Innovation in agriculture ensures food affordability.	79% [+1]	13% [+1]	8% [-1]
9. Food produced in Saskatchewan is safe.	91% [+2]	6% [-2]	3% [-1]
10. The agriculture sector transparently communicates about their practices.	54%	27% [-1]	19% [+1]

⁵ The results (per cents) for Q1, Q4, Q5 and Q6 do not total 100 due to rounding.

APPENDIX B: Comparison to Canadian Centre for Food Integrity Data

The Canadian Centre for Food Integrity (CCFI) is a non-profit organization with a mandate to help the Canadian food system earn trust through research, resources, dialogue and training. The CCFI conducts an annual national survey on public perception of agriculture and modern food production. They survey approximately 1,000 people across the country.

For more information on CCFI's research, visit www.foodintegrity.ca.

2021 Saskatchewan Survey		National (CCFI) Survey	
Have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.	89%	60%	Have a positive view of Canadian agriculture.
Livestock in Saskatchewan are treated humanely.	72%	39%	Concerned about humane treatment of animals in Canada.
The agriculture sector transparently communicates about their practices.	54%	34%	Canadian farmers/producers provide open and transparent information.
Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers take care of the environment.	73%	34%	Believe Canadian farmers are good stewards of the environment.
Food produced in Saskatchewan is safe.	91%	42%	Food produced in Canada is safe.